A/AC.172/1993/CRP.14/Add.7
20 May 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCES
Substantive session
Agenda item 12*

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Imre KARBUCZKY (Hungary)

Addendum

III. CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION (continued)

B. Implementation of the rules and regulations on control and limitation of documentation: compliance with the six-week rule for the issuance of pre-session documentation

Introduction and overview

1. At its 336th meeting, on 24 August 1992, the Committee on Conferences considered a report on Secretariat compliance with the six-week rule for issuance of pre-session documentation (A/AC.172/1992/CRP.5).

2. The Committee, inter alia, decided to repeat and strongly confirm its insistence on full compliance with the six-week rule. By paragraph 12 of resolution 47/202 B of 22 December 1992, the General Assembly urged subsidiary organs to review their agendas with a view to enabling the Secretariat's compliance with the six-week rule, inter alia, through combining agenda items and limiting requests for pre-session documentation, and requested the Secretary-General to inform the subsidiary organs of that appeal and to report orally to the Committee on Conferences on the measures taken to that effect.

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* A/AC.172/150/Add.1.

3. At its 347th and 350th meetings, on 18 and 19 May 1993, the Committee considered an interim report on the matter (A/AC.172/1993/CRP.8) on the understanding that supplementary information would be presented at its 1994 substantive session.

Discussion

4. The Secretariat stated that the conference room paper was an interim report only, outlining the problems faced by the Office of Conference Services owing to the increase in the volume of documentation and the late submission of documents by author departments. There was a need for closer coordination and dialogue with those departments.

5. The Committee noted that a serious situation existed regarding the timely issuance of documentation, due to increased workload, late submission by author departments and inadequate resources, and expressed the view that the problem must be tackled at the first stage of the process with greater accountability on the part of those responsible for documentation. Incentives to encourage compliance with the 10-week rule should be identified. Late submissions should not be accorded priority over timely submissions.

6. Adequate permanent staffing and resources must be provided for the Office of Conference Services. The management of workload, coordination and training were important, and the approaches outlined in sections III and IV of the paper should be developed further.

7. In order to ensure full compliance with the six-week rule by the Secretariat, Member States as members of intergovernmental bodies should, under an appropriate existing agenda item, review agendas seeking to combine items so as to effect an overall reduction in requests for documentation.

8. The Secretariat clarified points arising in the discussion, and noted that proposals for additional resources would be prepared for the next biennium. It was hoped to place greater emphasis on training and coordination to bring about an improvement in submissions and in the overall situation.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. The Committee took note of the preliminary findings and recommendations as contained in sections III and IV of the conference room paper.

10. The Committee encouraged the Secretariat to strengthen the training function exclusively for those responsible for the preparation of parliamentary documentation and the planning and forecasting functions in both author departments and the Office of Conference Services. The Committee reiterated the need for adequate resources in order to deal with the growing workload and to make it possible to better comply with the deadlines set by the General Assembly for the submission of documentation.

11. The Committee requested the Office of Conference Services to identify incentives in order to ensure compliance on the part of substantive departments

with the 10-week rule and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session on measures taken and on the impact of the implementation of this rule.

12. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it should invite intergovernmental bodies and their members to review their agendas with a view to enabling the Secretariat to comply with the six-week rule, inter alia, through combining agenda items, and to limit requests for pre-session documentation.

13. The Committee requested the Secretariat to proceed with the report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session as outlined in the conference room paper, taking into account the views expressed during the discussion.